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PRESS RELEASE

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Teenager Sentenced to 12-Year Prison Term In Near-Fatal Shooting at July 4th Party - His Gunfire Led to More Violence, Injuries -

WASHINGTON - Derrick Phillips, 19, was sentenced today to 12 years of incarceration for his role in a shooting at a July 4, 2009 block party that resulted in five people being wounded by gunfire, including one who was nearly killed, U.S. Attorney Ronald C. Machen Jr. announced.

Phillips, of the District, was found guilty in October 2010 by a jury in the Superior Court of the District of Columbia of charges of aggravated assault while armed with a firearm, possession of a firearm during a crime of violence, and carrying a pistol without a license. He was sentenced this morning by the Honorable Judge Ronna L. Beck.

According to the government's evidence, on July 4, 2009, several hundred people were gathered for an annual neighborhood party in the cul-de-sac in the 600 block of 46th Place SE, Washington, D.C. Phillips confronted another young man at the block party. He and the other man were associated with rival neighborhood crews that had a protracted history of violence. The exact nature of the dispute is unknown. Phillips initially left the party after arguing with the other man, presumably to retrieve a firearm, and he returned to the cul-de-sac soon after midnight, early July 5, 2009. More than 200 people were present when Phillips returned.

Phillips sought out the young man, brandished a handgun, and fired repeatedly at the victim as they stood only a few feet apart. The victim suffered five gunshot wounds. He was rushed to Washington Hospital Center, where trauma surgeons were able to save his life. In describing the violence today, Judge Beck referred to the crime as a "failed homicide."

Several other guests at the party had firearms and reacted by firing at Phillips. Phillips and those with him returned fire. All told, more than 29 shots were fired in the middle of the crowded street and an additional four people, including a nine-year-old girl, were struck in the

crossfire. Fortunately, all of the victims survived their injuries. A bullet also traveled through the living room of a residence in the 4600 block of G Street SE but did not hit any of the residents.

In announcing the sentence, U.S. Attorney Machen praised the work of Metropolitan Police Department (MPD) Detectives Andrea Latson and Eric Roche, and retired MPD Detective Kevin Tighe, who did an exemplary job investigating the case. He also praised the work of Crime Scene Technicians Nate Davis and Martin Fosso, who processed the crime scene and gathered valuable forensic evidence.

U.S. Attorney Machen also praised the efforts of U.S. Secret Service Special Agents Melissa Blake and Robert Jones and the entire Litigation Support Unit for their invaluable assistance preparing the case for trial. Finally, U.S. Attorney Machen expressed his special appreciation to Assistant U.S. Attorneys Adam B. Schwartz and Allison Barlotta who tried the case, and Bryan Seeley who indicted the case.

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